

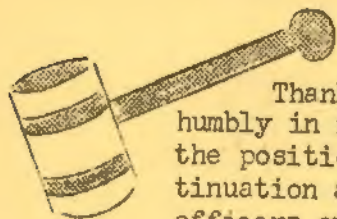
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# SACRED DANCE GUILD. NEWSLETTER.

SPRING 1970



A COMMUNICATION FROM OUR RESIDENT



To all Sacred Dance Guild members:

Thank you for the honor of electing me your president; I accept humbly in recognition of the responsibilities entailed. I consider the position a channel through which all our efforts flow for the continuation and growth of the Sacred Dance Guild. The fine slate of officers our Nominating Committee has provided will be my first line of assistants, but we cannot succeed without the help of each one of you. Tell us your needs; help us get the regional chapters functioning; support the workshops and June Institutes; suggest other ways the Sacred Dance Guild can serve; COMMUNICATE! Please!

Virginia Lucke

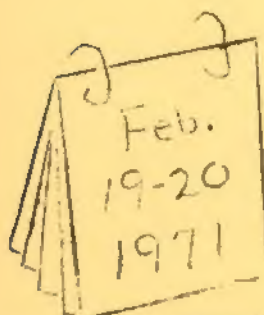
FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

An Open Letter to Harvey Cox:

Harvey Cox, I love you! Madly. And if your new book Feast of Fools, didn't do it, then that marvelous picture of you on the cover did. Admittedly, there's a wife in that picture, along with a zany assortment of family members — and of course I have a minister-husband and a sizable menagerie of my own — so our future, I fear, will be limited to the printed page. Even that could be pretty exciting, though, what with your splendid chapter on dance in Feast. You see, you've helped me muddle through my thinking on dance in the church, and if you don't have any easy answers, at least it's comforting to know there's somebody who understands.



As director of an itinerant dance group (in good old Wesleyan tradition), a group which has danced in many churches of all kinds, I'm just plain battle-weary. There have been moments of satisfaction, of exultation, of joy, it's true, but after four years on the road and another eleven before that of involvement in dance-in-the-church in various forms, I've got a few scars on my psyche to match the aches in my muscles. You see, they don't really understand (continued on page 9)



Mark your calendar now with these dates for the Annual Mid-Winter Workshop to be held this year in the Central Presbyterian Church of Summit, New Jersey.

Further details concerning program, leadership, etc., will be forthcoming.

ATTENTION, REGIONAL PUBLICITY PERSONNEL AND EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS:

Apparently our news-gathering machinery ran aground on the recent postal strike; very little news has reached the editor as of June 1st. Consequently, this issue will focus on resource materials; a mid-summer issue will focus on news of sacred dance throughout the country. Deadline for this issue will be July 3rd; this means an effort to reach people in your area should be made NOW! The mid-summer issue will also include news of the June Institute.



Tuesday, June 23rd through Friday, June 26th, 1970

MURRAY GROVE  
Lanoka Harbor, New Jersey

IN RESPONSE TO REQUESTS MADE IN PAST YEARS, THE TIME FOR THIS YEAR'S INSTITUTE HAS BEEN EXTENDED. FULL-TIME ATTENDANCE IS ENCOURAGED. ATTENDANCE IS LIMITED TO 70, AND APPLICANTS WILL BE ACCEPTED ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS. THOSE INTERESTED IN LESS THAN FULL-TIME ATTENDANCE MAY CONTACT THE REGISTRAR AND IF THE REGISTRATION LIMIT HAS NOT BEEN REACHED PART-TIME APPLICANTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AT A RATE OF \$14.00 PER DAY.

Come and explore the field of dance and body movement with the following staff:

ROBERT YOHN: Born in Fresno, California, studied with Charles Kelley and Don Farnworth; scholarship student at New Dance Group and member of New Dance Group Workshop for two years. Since 1968 has been member of the Erick Hawkins Dance Company which has toured much of U.S. Spent three seasons in summer stock; is member of S.D.G. and serves on our Program Committee. Directs two dance groups at Central Presbyterian Church, Summit, N.J.

CHARLES CRESCAN: Born in N.Y.C., studied with Alvin Nikolais, Paul Sanasardo, Joan Woodbury, James Waring, John Barber, Viola Farber. Has choreographed and performed works at the Henry Street Playhouse, Rutgers University, Judson Memorial Church and in avant-garde film "Whispers". Served as stage manager for James Waring's ballet concerts, taught at Little Flower Montessori School, and now teaches creative dance for children at the American Motion Picture Academy at N.Y.C. and creative rhythms for children at the Recreation Center in Leonia, N.J.; he is also a member of the Story Time Dance Theater.

DAREN MILLER: Studied theatre, radio, music and dance in Philadelphia and N.Y.C. from 1947-50, then directed Red Lion Little Theatre in Pennsylvania. Served in Special Services for U.S. Army during World War II and Korean War, then became Methodist minister with BA from Dickinson College, BD from Drew Theological Seminary. Member of S.D.G. for seven years, currently Program Director. Engaged in research for past two years in psychic phenomenon and in yoga as it related to meaning for man and discipline of mind and body. Director for three years of Crusaders and Covenant Dancers of Dunellen Methodist Church in Dunellen, N.J.

Detach and mail with \$5.00 deposit to: Rev. Daren L. Miller, Registrar, 47 Main St., Stony Point, N.Y. 10980. Registration deadline is JUNE 15TH. Checks should be made payable to Rev. Daren L. Miller. Deposit refunded only if institute is cancelled. Address inquiries to Rev. Miller or telephone at 201-786-3355.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

(Please fill in reverse side of form)



JUNE INSTITUTE (continued)

Registration is from 6:30-8:00 p.m. on June 23rd. The Institute will close at 1:00 p.m. on June 26th.

Murray Grove is set in the New Jersey pines on 260 acres along Barnegat Bay. It is an ideal vacation site with modern lodgings and pool, spacious grounds for hiking, family-style meals, and courteous service by the staff. Bring casual clothes, comfortable shoes, swimsuit and cap, dance clothes, a robe (showers are shared), notebooks and pencils. There are no single accommodations unless space becomes available through low registration.

TRAVEL DIRECTIONS: Murray Grove is located on Rte. #9 south of Toms River. Lincoln Transit and Public Service Buses every hour until 7:30 p.m. from Port Authority Terminal, 41st & 8th Avenue in N.Y.C.; Garden State Parkway south to Rte. #9, Toms River, and south on Rte. #9. From west via N.J. 70 & 72 to Rte. #9. Plenty of free parking area. Buses from N.Y.C. stop at Murray Grove if driver is requested.

A MEETING OF THE S.D.G. EXECUTIVE BOARD IS SCHEDULED FOR 3:40-6:00 p.m. ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24th.

There will be a Lifeguard for swimming periods.

Participants will be grouped into two groups as registrations are received; each group will meet with each instructor 5 times, for a total of 5 hours with each one. Bring any musical instrument you may play, but especially any rhythm instruments. Bring questions you would like to submit to the panel scheduled for Thursday evening.

As last year, a limited number of teenagers (boys or girls), may attend the Institute for a flat fee of \$5.00 if they are willing to assist in the dining room at meal-times. The first seven applicants will be accepted. Indicate below if you wish to take advantage of this offer.

Memberships will be received or renewed at the Institute.

Please notify the Program Chairman if you know of someone who would like information regarding the Institute.

Detach and mail form below by June 15th.

I would like to room with \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to assist in the dining room \_\_\_\_\_

Check fee category:

S.D.G. member (adult)-\$38.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Non-member (adult)-\$42.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Student (high school or college)-\$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_



THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS WERE ELECTED IN OUR RECENT BY-MAIL VOTING:

President: Virginia Lucke (Mrs. John), 1156 Gladstone Dr., S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506  
 Vice-President: Maxine LeBruyn (Mrs. Robt.), Box 76, Zeeland, Michigan 49464  
 Recording Secretary: Sister Grace, OSH, Convent of St. Helena, Box 426, Vails Gate, New York 12584  
 Corresponding Secretary: Winona Cayvan, East Congregational Church, 1005 Giddings Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506  
 Treasurer: Toni Intrevaia (Mrs. L.J.), 201 Hewitt, Carvondale, Illinois 62901  
 Membership Chairman: Wendy Hartman (Mrs. Carl), 127 Pine St., Rockville Centre, New York 11570  
 Program Chairman: Rev. Daren Miller, 47 Main Street, Stony Point, New York 10980  
 National Publicity Chairman: Marion DuBois (Mrs. Thos.), 14 Ashwood Terrace, Newburgh, New York 12550  
 Directors (term expiring 1973):  
 Gladys Kanter (Mrs. Irving), 277 Waltham St., Lexington, Massachusetts 02173  
 Priscilla Baxter (Mrs. Chas.), 34 Olcott Dr., Manchester, Connecticut 06040  
 Naomi Aleh-Leaf, 44 Atlantic Avenue, Swampscott, Massachusetts 01907

Regional Publicity Personnel:

Outreach: Alma Tucker (Mrs. Wellington), 579 Teesdale Pl., Apt. 12, Bronx, New York 10456  
 California: Rev. Doug Adams, 2910 Wheeler St., Apt. 6, Berkeley, California 94705  
 Connecticut: Betty Holden (Mrs. Frederick), 66 Silliman Rd., Wallingford, Connecticut 06492  
 Massachusetts: Sylvia Humphrey (Mrs. Edward), 31 Edgewood St., Springfield, Massachusetts 01109  
 Mid-West: Ruth Loomis (Mrs. H.B.), 301 Thornapple, St. Clair, Michigan 48079  
 North-West: Virginia Huffine (Mrs. C. L.), 2347 5th Avenue, N.E., Rochester, Minnesota 55901  
 New Jersey: Jean McCurdy (Mrs. Wm.), 2 Plumtree Lane, Willingboro, New Jersey 08046  
 New York: Sally Steinmetz, 90 Gregory Avenue, Mt. Kisco, New York 10549  
 Pennsylvania: Avis-Ann Parke (Mrs. David), 7043 Greene St., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19119  
 Maine, N.H., Vermont: Priscilla Richardson, Box 335, Terrace St., Marlborough, New Hampshire 03455

FOLLOWUP ON MID-WINTER WORKSHOPS

First Methodist Church . . . . . , Middletown, Ohio

Thirty-one persons attended the workshop, some coming from considerable distances to take part. The church proved to be a fine location in the downtown area near hotels, with excellent space for workshop sessions. A sharing session on Friday evening included:

"The Annunciation" - Edgewood Congregational Church (E. Lansing)  
 "The Lord's Prayer" and "Coloring Book: Color Me White/Black" - group from Coshocton

PROMISES choirs of First Methodist Church (Middletown), directed by Clem Burton, small part of group of sixty which recently toured Japan, presented: "Call to Worship", "Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream", "Go Tell It On the Mountain", Kyrie (5-part Greek round); "Rejoice and Be Merry", "By the Waters of Babylon", "Sing Praise to the Lord", "Jesus We Want to Meet"



Workshop Followup (continued)

(Nigerian hymn from Methodist Hymnal), "Prayer of St. Francis" (Robt. McAfee). Poetry and Dance - group of poems danced by Toni Intravaia providing example of use of spoken word, sometimes moving with the words, sometimes moving during silences following the words; poems used were: excerpts from "The Rock" by T. S. Eliot, Psalm 150, "A Birthday" by Christina Rossetti and "They Come No More, Those Words, Those Finches" by Archibald MacLeish.

Evaluations filled in at the close of the workshop indicated that the technical sessions helped improve balance, turns, use of feet, offered new movement patterns and processional movements, new ideas for music and spoken accompaniment. One student wrote, "dancing is something you can use when you can't tell what you feel". Adult participants added their felt need for more technical skill, liked the use of a central point in space and relating to it.

Leaders for the Middletown workshop were Toni Intravaia and Forrest Coggan. Following are capsule summaries of their sessions.

Technique Class with Toni Intravaia:

Stressed flexible foot, stretching of foot by lifting heel off floor to rest on ball of foot, then lifting ball to rest on tip of toes; also develops awareness of line. Leg swings forward and back, side, circling. Spine exercises using both curved and flat back. Leg lifts added to bending of back.

Runs used forward, back, in combinations: run-run-leap, run-run-hop; pointed out interesting possibilities such as using run-leap combination forward, run-hop back, different parts of class going opposite directions.

Stretching on floor: sit with knees bent, pull to chest with arms to stretch back; balance, straighten legs, lift off floor and pull to chest as toes point to ceiling. Stride-sit: bend forward to stretch back and knees; side bends. For those with cold or limited floor space Toni suggested warming up by standing, pulling knee to chest, straighten back and stretch foot.

Turning progression: quarter turns, half turns, dividing group so dancers moved toward and away from each other.

Kneeling variations: Warmup with sit, knees pulled to chest, reach back with hands under shoulders for support until able to lift hips off floor; progress to kneeling, sit back on heels and push hips forward while leaning back (takes gradual increase in thigh muscle strength). Kneel turns (with knee pads); turn by rotating on knee; add leg extensions, pattern by having half of group go right, half left; combine with side sits.

Session clear, easy to follow, progression in difficulty so could be adjusted for groups of varying ability. Material used could be incorporated into processions, other types of dances, or serve as basis for more complicated technical work.

Energy Contours In Life and Art or Motion (experience) and Motif (central idea)  
led by Forrest Coggan

Speaking of communication Forrest quoted "the organism is primarily concerned with the forces that are active around it", then began to explore ways to become sensitive to forces and organize them for purposes of artistic messages. First part of class devoted to "surrender" to an imaginary source or point of power located in "far space". Class was asked to imagine being pulled toward or repulsed by this



Workshop Followup

magnetic point, or in balanced orbit around it. Toward, away from and around were the three principle directions of motion. Next the class was to experiment with the interposition of their own will in resisting or amplifying the action of the imaginary external force; there followed discussion on how the illusion could be achieved and a technical key of "tensional gradients" was presented using isometric and isotonic methods. Next came experiments with more than one power point in far space with the body caught between moving or static points. To demonstrate the transfer of these principles to the life situation, Forrest chose the rise of the prone human figure away from the magnetic center of the earth and away from the surface of the planet. In order to intensify the experience, resistance and images calling forth increased muscular interplay (as with greatly imagined increase in gravity or body weight) were dramatically used. A second demonstration recalled the unfolding of the body at birth from focus in or near body center into radial "trust and the free exposure of vital (easily damaged) body surfaces.

With these common experiences within the recent grasp of the entire class, the phrasing of individual or religious experience was then constructed through the use of the same principles, interjecting various degrees of human will to counter "other" or environmental forces, all fluctuating to produce the drama of decision and life response. On this approach, Forrest believes, solid communication even at subliminal levels can be built, since the viewing public is also made up of those "organisms primarily concerned with the forces active around them". The sessions were completely absorbing to all and opened new thresholds of thought for composition which often tends to be simply nice to look at, or pretty. The class had, in fact, moved from motion (experience) to motif (central idea) in one session; this concept is especially suited to dancers concerned with other-self rationale.

The last session on Saturday opened with Toni Intravaia's basic locomotor orientation for the entire group, followed by rhythmic problem posed by Forrest using above concepts with sharp changes in direction. He then taught passages from his "Taiwa", a theatre-piece based on the Orpheus legend, using a swinging-hopping processional which climaxes his "Dance Ritual for Easter" from Sinfonia Sacra which uses Howard Hanson's Fifth Symphony.

-Virginia Lucke

New City Methodist Church . . . . . New City, N.Y.

After some apprehension concerning housing, meals and location, we chose New City in Rockland County as our workshop location; most of our early anxieties were erased by the favorable comments and evaluations of a majority of participants. A bouquet of appreciation goes to Carol Thaler and Linda Rubin, our instructors in Graham technique and improvisation; both were charming and personable, as well as excellent instructors. Our unexpectedly large attendance threw some of our plans and ideas into the wastebasket; the theme of "Peace Through Dance" may have become secondary. Yet evaluation sheets indicate participants felt they gained a new knowledge of themselves, their bodies, and of their own inner capabilities for creativity. Perhaps the theme was misleading, with some persons taking the word "peace" to mean a national and international concept, with others assuming it referred to inner peace and assurance.

The technique and improvisation sessions helped in breaking open the shells we build around ourselves. In turn, this led to real fellowship, cooperative spirit, and openness of people to each other which was an indication of the spirit of understanding needed by all people for a life of inner and outer peace.

-Daren Miller

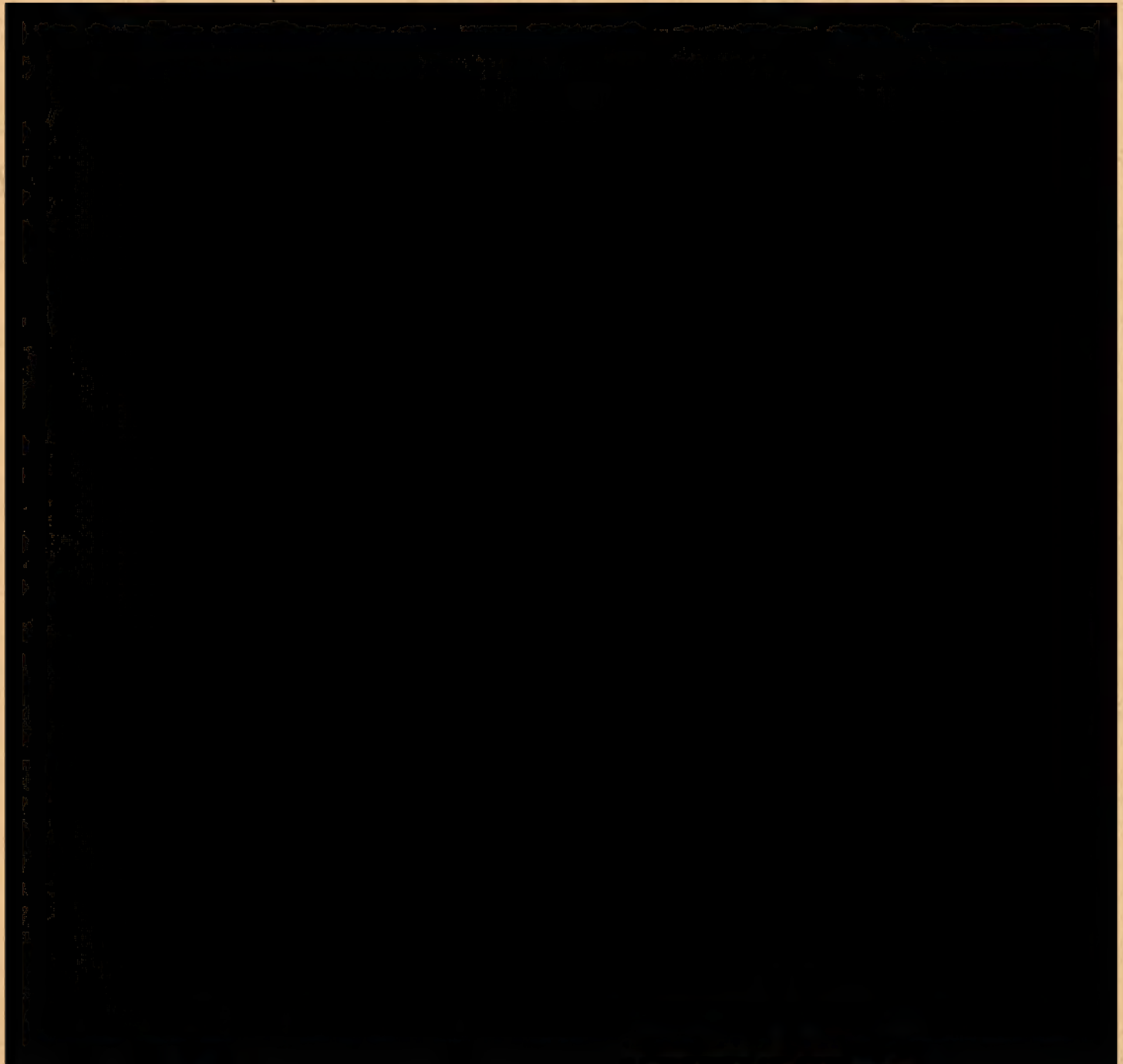




# Spotlight

ON

NEW MEMBERS



(continued on page 12)



An Open Letter to Harvey Cox (continued)

us out there, Dr. Cox -- the ones who've asked us to dance -- they think they're terribly open and progressive and all-that-jazz. And everything is peaches and cream as long as it's a peaches and cream kind of a dance -- pleasing, lyrical, a bit melodramatic, maybe. You know -- a pretty dance! Only trouble is, life's not always pretty, and I want to dance about life, and offer that dance to God, but it's hard to do that in the church because there's no market there for dances with (please excuse me, Dr. C.) GUTS. There, I've said it -- and I'll say that other word, too -- SEX! That gets in the way -- but, then, you know that, and you wrote about it in your book. It's been there right from the beginning, when I wouldn't put my dancers in those ghostly white robes. They're very big in some circles yet, those white robes, and the reason, of course, is because they do a beautiful job of obscuring the (dare I throw in another risqué word?) BODY.

Really, though, we made it, even in leotards and tights, but then we did wear ankle-length skirts so if we looked, well -- feminine -- from the waist up, at least we were safe from the waist down -- and that is what counts, isn't it? There was one lady who couldn't relax at a mid-week Lenten service until our skirts had flared out enough to reveal those tights. The thought of all that bare flesh hiding beneath a swishy skirt -- it was just too much, Dr. C. -- the poor lady couldn't think, much less consider the dance and whatever it had to say.

Then there was that other lady -- the one who turned up when we danced without skirts. Let me hasten to assure you that the leotards and tights were still there; I mean, it wasn't as if we were cavorting like topless go-go dancers or anything like that! It's just that we were doing this terribly contemporary thing about reconciliation, and it was called "give a damn" (that four-letter word was mistake #1) and it was to some very groovey music by Pink Floyd. Now, part of the problem was the music; you just don't deal with today's concerns and use yesterday's music. And if you use the music of today, whether jazz or pseudo-folk or acid rock, then the spirit of the music must be reflected in the movement -- which means trouble, because it involves the whole body, not just the nice, safe waving arms, and that's bad news -- very bad. Well, anyhow, back to the dance; it climaxed two others called "you get yours and I'll get mine" and "self-destruct", and they moved from Penderecki through Pfeiffer to the Pink Floyd. Of course it moved and grooved and who wants to do that with four yards of jersey from the waist down? So we danced without skirts, and we tried very hard to say something worthwhile about how the world may be pretty rotten, but the only way it will get better is if we care a little about each other. The lady didn't hear us, though -- she never got past our anatomies, and all the years of sweating and aching through dance classes, and the months of listening to music and choreographing, and the hours and hours of rehearsing went -- pow! -- in a soggy heap. This lady was singular only because she verbalized what many others have thought or hinted at when she came up to one of my best dancers with "Do you know you are a very sensual dancer?" Now she could have meant many things but, take my word for it, Dr. C., what she did mean wasn't very nice. What she was really saying was "You are a sexy dancer -- and everybody knows sex doesn't belong in church!"

Now actually I have to admit she had a point -- about my dancer, that is. She's long and willowy and a real knock-out in a bikini. But she wasn't wearing a bikini and she wasn't trying to seduce anybody. She was simply trying to use her God-given ability as a dancer in the church, but her other God-given attributes got in the way. Now I ask you, Dr. C., as director what do I do with this girl? Hide her in the back row? She's feeling less at home in the church with each passing day, and the ladies like the ones I've told you about are making my job very difficult. I used to be concerned about the quality of my work; now I'm forced to be preoccupied

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An Open Letter to Harvey Cox(continued)

with its acceptability, its inoffensiveness. I'd about decided it was time to dance somewhere else when your book came along -- now I'll think it over a little longer. But I won't, as a dancer, compromise what I know to be worthy and true just to pacify church-ladies with "body-hangups". I'll dance somewhere else first, because I agree with another dancer, Pauline Koner, who said that "all dance is sacred, just as all of life is sacred."

And the dancer I told you about -- the one with the distracting anatomy -- she's got a brain inside her pretty head, and she's been using it a lot lately. We were curled up side-by-side in a nestful of eggs, waiting our turn to hatch, as the curtain went up on a dance-production of "The Ugly Duckling", when she looked suddenly uncomfortable (it was a very small nest to begin with) and said reproachfully, "We didn't have our prayer circle". "Now, really," I pointed out, "we're doing 'The Ugly Duckling', not a mid-week Lenten service -- we are not even in a church. This is a public school, and you know how they feel about prayer here." "O.K." she mumbled, still looking uneasy (it's hard to stay curled up like an egg -- the blood goes to your head), "but this may be the most religious thing we've done." And you know, Dr. C., she just may be right. We made a lot of children and their teachers laugh and cry and think about how it feels to be laughed at and to be alone and afraid. They even went back to their classrooms and talked about it together. That's more, my sexy dancer was the ugly duckling who became a swan and, would you believe, the children didn't even notice how sexy she was?

I hope you're right, Dr. C. -- about the return of festivity and the affirmation of the flesh in the house of God -- I hope that you're right and that we've just been dancing in the wrong churches. And if you're not, well then, we'll hope that the time you wrote about will arrive soon, when "once again we can talk about the redemption of the body without embarrassment." In the meantime, I'll give your book an affectionate pat on the dust jacket every now and then, and sing its praises to my friends-in-dance; maybe it will help us all hang on a little longer.

Gratefully,

Judith Bennett, Editor  
S.D.G. NEWSLETTER

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES?

- Sacred Dance Kit (order blank on back page of this Newsletter). A new supply is on the way from the printer; if you have ordered and not received yours, be patient, it will soon be on its way.
- S.D.G. brochures (write National Publicity Chairman Marion DuBois, 14 Ashwood Terr., Newburgh, N.Y. 12550)
- S.D.G. membership information (write Membership Chairman Wendy Hartman, 127 Pine St., Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11570)
- Looking for books in the dance field? The following addresses may be of help:
  - The Dance Mart, Box 48, Homecrest Station, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11229
  - Dance Horizons (non-profit organization publishing paperback editions of dance classics), 1801 E. 26th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11229



WATER INTO WINE . . . . . Sister Grace, OSH

The following paragraphs provided the theme and introduction to a recent arts festival at the Convent of Saint Helena in Vails Gate, New York.

The story is that one day Jesus and his friends went to a wedding, and at the reception afterwards the wine gave out. So Jesus had the waiters fill several pots with water, and by his power the water became wine, so that the feast could go on as it should.

Wine has always meant something more to man than a mere beverage. It is a drink for feasts, for significant occasions; it adds a special quality to ordinary meals; everything is a bit richer, deeper, more-dimensional, when wine is around. It does something to our perceptions, and we see the world as we would not have seen it before. And this has always seemed at least a little marvelous to men who know that wine has its origins in grape juice, and before that in plain, straightforward water, neither of which have any such power.

The power of the artist is rather like that of wine. Rembrandt paints an old woman such as his contemporaries must have seen daily and passed unnoticed; and suddenly the pathos of all humanity speaks to us in her figure. Corita gives us silk-screened words whose letters dance and shrink and swell oil over the page, and the words have richness and suggestion and multi-levelled meanings we had never realized before.

The artist may celebrate or accuse, call us to rejoice or to repent, be primarily priest or prophet. And we may respond or not. It is for us to choose how we will respond. For not every vision is a true one. The artist may be mistaken, or he may be putting us on. Yet even in the mistake or the put-on we may find truth, if we are willing to look for it there. Every so often, men become so conscious of the dangers of misusing wine that they refuse to use it at all, and so deprive themselves of its good. If we do the same with art, we deprive ourselves of a major avenue to the understanding of our world. We have to choose whether we will receive the vision as a true one; but we can only choose rightly after we have opened ourselves to perceive what the vision is.

TEEN AGES AND SACRED DANCE . . . . . Louise Mattlage

Recently a guest on the David Frost show cited the horrors of presenting shows to teenagers. "High schools," he said, "are murder!" They sit on their hands, he went on, they force laughter at the end of the act, they walk out in silence.

What's wrong? Why did these professional humorists get the negative sit-on-the-hands treatment? Maybe these young people have had a surfeit of entertainment. Maybe they sense a second-rate reality behind much of the shallowness of show business. Maybe vaudeville went out with their parents or grandparents. Maybe this kind of spurious, falsely funny entertainment bores our contemporary young because they know the world needs something else — something more meaningful.

Are responses to sacred dance similar? From my own experience in presenting "Dances of Faith" to mixed audiences of boys and girls from kindergarten through 12th grade, the reaction has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic. If young people are prepared briefly ahead of time for the kind of work they will see, if they are advised of the excitement of it, if they are encouraged to participate, there is a positive fervor in their enthusiasm. Adolescents have a terrific sensitivity to depth and sincerity, they have a great sense of identity, they have great empathy — they believe. They need to have a means to express their faith. As an audience they relate vicariously to sacred dance with fervency and wholehearted pleasure.

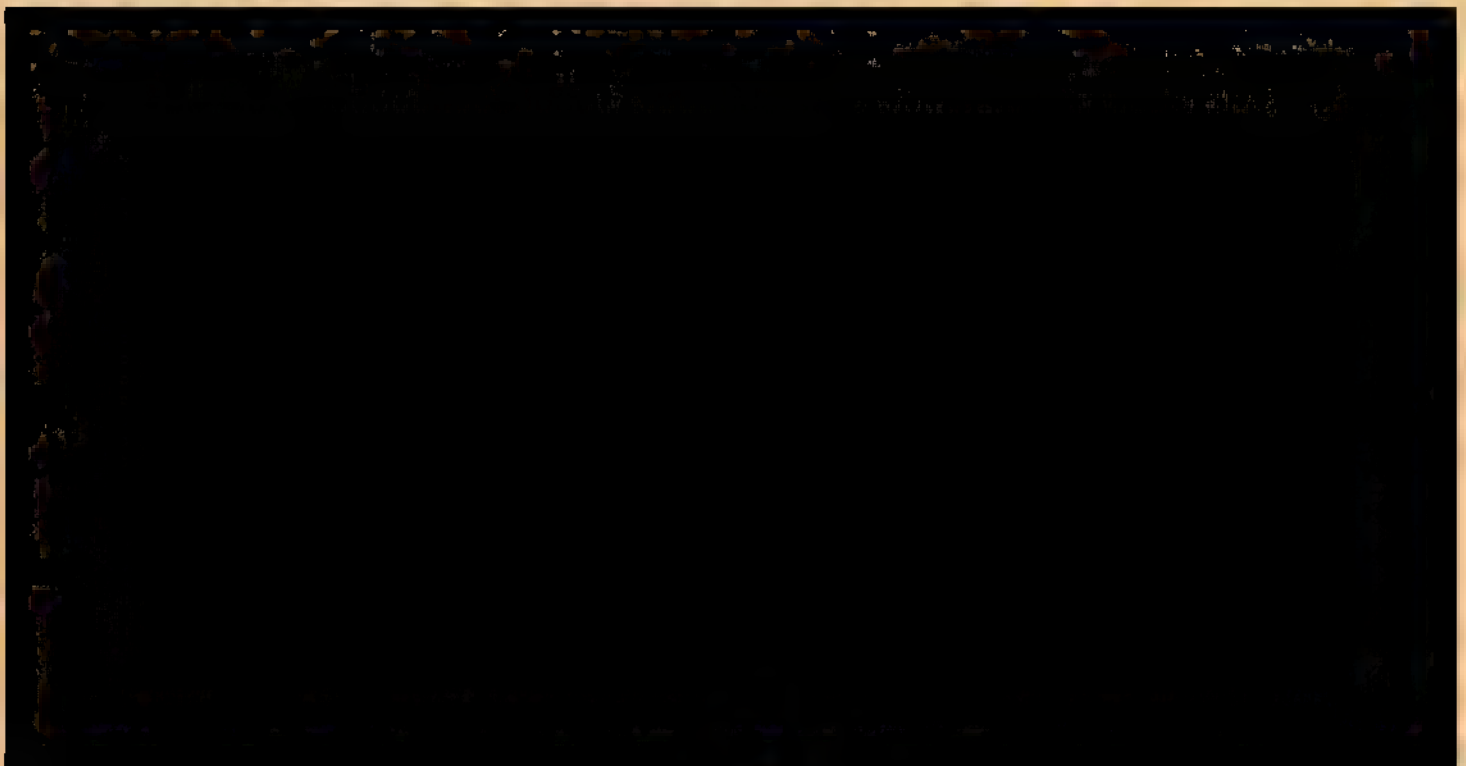
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Teenagers and Sacred Dance (continued)

Sacred Dance Guild members should encourage the use of the wonderful contemporary music now available in religious themes, when they are working with or demonstrating for the adolescent. There are several Beatles recordings that have some beautiful religious statements. There is Arlo Guthrie's "Amazing Grace". Country music revival songs are splendidly exciting. There are many recordings of the classical worship services done in modern idiom, e.g., that recorded by the Young People's Choir of the Milford Congregational Church in Connecticut, which offers a splendid selection with tremendous dance possibilities. This kind of music should be used for this age group. If the youth of the early part of this century responded to Strauss waltzes by dancing in the streets, today's youth responds equally well to a different kind of sound and rhythm.

Joy is near the surface in teenagers. Joy is an expression of faith and a perfect way to experience it is through sacred dance. There is joy in experiencing and expressing faith. Young people are acutely aware of this inner need. If they are guided into means of actively doing something to state their faith and joy in life, then the joy and the strength that their faith gives them is more real, more exciting and rewarding than any form of superficial entertainment. There is nothing wrong with our adolescents. It's what we're offering them that's wrong.

Spotlight on New Members (continued from page 8)



THE USE OF DANCE IN WORSHIP

Doug Adams

(The following was prepared for a United Church conference on new forms of worship held in northern California.)

THEORY

The word becomes flesh and brings joy to the world. As the religion of the incarnation, we ought to have more incarnation in our worship. Our God is an active, moving God: yet in our worship service, we sit still, or try to. And then we wonder why a sense of community and joy are often missing in our Protestant pew-centered worship. One reason that so many fail to find community and joy in the worship is that instead of moving, they sit. We as ministers and choir members may find a great sense of community and joy in worship; but we are often the only ones who are moving.

In the Hebrew language "company" is derived from "dance"; and in the Aramaic which Jesus spoke, "dance" is the basis for "rejoicing". Thus, Jesus tells us, "Rejoice and leap for joy." (Luke 6:23). Dancing accompanies returning to the Father (Luke 15:25); for in moving, we lose self-consciousness and shake off the past and open to sense more. Too many of us follow not Christ or David but rather sit in line with Michael (David's wife who looked down upon dancing) (II Samuel 6:16-23).

The early church did a great deal of dancing -- incarnating the words of the gospel and hymns. The words "choir" and "carol" and "chorus" derive from "dance" and reveal a good deal about the choreographies in the early church worship. And the Latin for bishop (praesul) meant "dance leader". Pews and pulpits and other obstructions to movement are very recent additions to churches and are rarely to be found in the Orthodox areas of Christianity. Pulpits were concessions to self-conscious clergy who wished to hide behind something; and rows of pews (which in early Christianity were few in number and reserved for the aged and infirm) are a sad testimony to the vitality of Christianity in the West today.

To regain a sense of community and joy in worship and to show others the incarnating active nature of our Lord, let us lead our congregations in moving worship. When our worship begins to really move, we can expect our youth to follow in this way and not go other ways; for this movement is something even small children can do in worship and will probably lead us in doing.

Also, those of us interested in black and white together today or someday should begin preparing our white congregations to move, so that in intercession, blacks won't have to leave their bodies behind as they have had to do in the past whenever entering white worship services. One of the great gifts of the black movement to whites is a renewal of the body, as Eldridge Cleaver has pointed out in one of the most hopeful chapters recently written, "Convalescence" in Soul On Ice: "Chubby Checkers brought the good news to the white man when he taught him to twist."

Let us love our souls off ice. (The Devil is characteristically pictured by Dante, as by others, as one enclosed in a cake of ice and unable to move except as he "stood forth at mid-breast from the ice". How like most ministers behind pulpits!) Let us move our mind-body-souls into action. (In Dante's vision as with him in literature, the closer one is to God the more active one becomes: the angels are led by God in dance; and so, let us dance.)

"Let their praise has name with dancing" (Psalm 149:3); so that we may say once again at the close of worship, "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness" (Psalm 30:11).

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The Use of Dance in Worship (continued)PRACTICEFor Introduction of Dance to Congregations

The numbers of people in the congregation who feel free to participate in movement seems to vary directly with the amount of Biblical material presented to show that dance is called for by the Judeo-Christian tradition of worship. Worship and prayer were called the lifting up of holy hands throughout scripture. One may cite Paul's famous injunction among other biblical material: "I appeal to you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1). Help congregations see their movement in worship as symbolic of their response to Christ in life. Jesus observed of those "proper", "dignified", and "sad" Pharisees who did not follow him, "We have piped unto you, but you have not danced." (Matthew 11:17). Let us not be like those Pharisees; let us instead follow Jesus' injunction and "leap for joy".

If the adults are still hesitant to move, have them sing and let the children do the dancing. Children will happily respond; and the adults may see why Jesus said, "Unless you turn and become like these, you will not enter into heaven." In any case, no one should be forced to dance. Having some sing while others dance is perfectly illustrative of the sort of diversity, not conformity, in community which we should encourage.

For Processions and Recessions

1) One easy way to fill up the front pews and bring people closer together with a sense of community is to have everyone process into the front pews while they sing the processional hymn. If all the pews are filled at the start of the service, all may process down one aisle and up another or around the inside of the sanctuary while singing; or on festive occasions, the congregation or a part of it could process outside and around the church singing and perhaps even draw in a few other people as the early church did on the way to worship. One may also have the congregation assemble outside the sanctuary or chapel (in another room or outdoors) and then process into the sanctuary.

2) In similar fashion, the congregation may recess out during the last hymn (The complications of having hymnals in hands may be eliminated by having the processional or recessional be one verse of a familiar hymn sung over and over -- thus the people are freed to look up and around and at each other.) Such recessing has the power of increasing the sense of intension: the sense of commitment and going forth to serve. The recessions may be done in different ways to emphasize the particular message for the day.

a) If the emphasis is on brotherhood, one may have the people exit two by two holding hands. The second verse of "In Christ There Is No East or West" ("join hands then, brothers of the faith") is perfect for this as is the second verse of Ray Repp's "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love" ("we will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand"). One may have people join hands in the pews while singing these verses; but the sense of intension is greatly increased by walking together or marching together as the civil rights and peace movements are rediscovering in our time. (Joshua knew this long ago.)

b) If the message is that of hope in spite of recent setbacks, one may have the people go forth singing "Amen" or "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Round".

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The Use of Dance in Worship (continued)

The message may be heightened by having the people do the tripudium step (which means "three step" or "jubilate" in Latin and which is simply three steps forward and one back, three steps forward and one back, etc.) Clapping of hands with the steps helps to keep the people moving together.

c) If the message emphasizes the presence of God in all, one may send or lead the people forth singing "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" to the accompaniment of clapping hands and jingling of keys. This is especially powerful at the conclusion of communion or other sacramental moments.

For the Confessional and Assurance

The pattern in which most congregations seat themselves (if they are not forced to sit together by lack of space) is graphic confession in itself of our distance from one another and from God. One may simply point out this distance as the confession and then read the assurance and have the people move together into the front pews while they sing the next hymn.

For Carols and Choruses

1) As indicated in the discussion of dance theory, Christmas carols and the choruses of all hymns should be danced or moved to if only by processing around the church. Certain Christmas carols could be sung by the people while they move past the traditional Christmas stable scene. At other times of the year, the viewing of posters (put up on the walls of the sanctuary) could easily be made more effective by the people singing some hymn appropriate to the message while they process past the posters.

2) The choreography of hymns is revealed by the designation of part of the hymn as "stanza" and another part as "chorus". Stanza means stand or halt and chorus means dance or move. Thus, on the stanza the congregation could move in a circle in the outside aisles or do a simple hand or arm movement in the pews. The latter we have demonstrated with Ray Repp's "Into Your Hands" from the Come Alive album. A fund of traditional older material which is appropriate for the above use is collected in Vaughan Williams' The Oxford Book of Carols and condensed in Elizabeth Poston's The Penguin Book of Christmas Carols. There is a scarcity of choruses in hymnals of the last twenty years; but many are coming back into vogue in modern folk songs by Ray Repp and others.

For Choirs

Many books give guidance on forming a rhythmic choir. One can gain a full kit on the subject for \$2.00 from the Sacred Dance Guild. Performances by such choirs should involve the congregation at least in some small way: let the congregation sing a chorus of the song or clap along. Without some congregational participation, the congregation sits and often becomes critical. When one sits, he is likely to see this or that that distracts; but when one becomes involved and dances, he is unlikely to become fixated on any detail. The choir too is less likely to be self-conscious if they are leading the congregation and not just performing. Music and choreographic suggestions are to be had not only in kit form from the Sacred Dance Guild but also abound in the Guild's Newsletter which details state by state what each rhythmic choir has been doing and also lists what new books on dance in worship have been published or are to be published.

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The Use of Dance in Worship (continued)For the Lord's Prayer

Full choreographies of this prayer and other scriptures, hymns, carols, etc., are given by Margaret Taylor in Time for Discovery. There are many choreographies for the prayer; most people dance in a circle holding hands to emphasize the corporate result of praying "Our Father". The music from the West Indies version, the "Twentieth Century Folk Mass" or the "Rejoice" mass allows enough time to do the movements to emphasize the words of the prayer. Some may dance the prayer in the chancel while others do somewhat limited movements in the pews: spreading their arms and taking the hands of others on "Our Father", lifting their hands and looking at them during "Thy will be done, thy kingdom come", and movements of forgiving the neighbor, etc.

For the Communion

Passing the peace before communion and taking the leftover bread home to others after communion, as well as standing around the table during communion, help emphasize the fellowship and community aspects. Remaining standing after communion through the end of the service symbolizes the strengthening effect. These are traditional among the Orthodox Christian practices.

ORGANIZATION

In most of our communities there are people who are greatly interested in dance in church worship and have long sought to help. The Sacred Dance Guild has a list of resource people in your area which is available upon request.

RESOURCES

The Sacred Dance Guild Newsletter is a real must! For \$3.00 a year, one receives notices of dance happenings in worship around the country as well as current postings of all publications and resource people, workshops, etc. To subscribe, send a \$3.00 check to membership chairman Wendy Hartman, 127 Pine Street, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11570. Margaret Taylor's books are the best available: A Time To Dance: Symbolic Movement in Worship gives all information needed to start a choir as well as historic and biblical material, lists of films, books, etc. Her manual Time for Discovery gives many helpful choreographies. Both are available through United Church Press, 1505 Race St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19102, the first at \$2.95; the second at \$3.25.

In the study kit, Creative Arts in Reconciliation, produced by the National Council of Churches and by Church Women United, there is a booklet, Creative Movement: Steps Toward Understanding, written by Margaret Taylor, which also includes a filmstrip by Pat Sonen and her dancers. The complete study kit is priced at \$5.95; however, if you wish to purchase only the booklet and filmstrip, you may do so by sending \$1.75 to Virginia Lucke, 1156 Gladstone Dr., S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506. Included are various ways to get church groups involved in creative movement -- for a program for women's groups, for youth meetings, for family night. The material is basic and adaptable.



MEMO TO CHURCHES AND CLERGY (please pass to interested member of your congregation)

FROM: The SACRED DANCE GUILD

SUBJECT: DANCE IN YOUR RELIGIOUS SERVICE\* and MOVEMENT IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL\*\*

\*Dance was man's earliest religious expression. It has been an important part of ritual and worship in virtually all religions. The meaning and values it has to express that which cannot be expressed in any other way is being re-discovered by many churches today. Dance is a universal language, contributing to the ecumenical spirit of contemporary church life. It makes a direct kinesthetic appeal to our visually-oriented congregations. For those who dance, it is a creative outlet for expression and communication, not without its value as a harbinger of sound mental and physical health. "Praise his name with dancing!" exhorts us to worship God with our entire being, to give physical expression to the yearnings of the spirit, to make ours an active and living faith. The dance adds a dimension to worship with which many can identify and find release and fulfillment.

\*\*Creative movement used by teachers in the classroom with children of all ages is a dramatic and effective teaching technique. Learning through movement is the goal here, NOT preparing for the sake of performance.

HELPS AND GUIDELINES (for dance directors, clergy, church school teachers, church musicians, etc.) We will mail to you any one of the following aids at the prices listed, or the entire kit at a special rate of \$1.50

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SPECIAL OFFER: Entire kit at \$1.50 \_\_\_\_\_

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|----------|-------|--|
| 50 cents | _____ | 1. <u>Considerations for Starting A Dance Choir</u><br>-Who and how to begin<br>-Using a professional dancer<br>-Costumes, publicity and other helps |
| 40 cents | _____ | 2. <u>Choosing A Theme and Music and Evaluating Sacred Dance</u>   |
| Free     | _____ | 3. <u>Roster of Resource People</u> (dancers, musicians, directors)<br>-There may be someone in your area who is available for help.                 |
| 40 cents | _____ | 4. <u>Using Creative Movement in Religious Education</u><br>-Easy to read, easy to use classroom techniques to bring new life to the church school.  |
| 40 cents | _____ | 5. <u>How to Plan A Sacred Dance Workshop and BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>   |
| Free     | _____ | 6. <u>The Sacred Dance Guild Brochure</u><br>-Describing the origin, purpose of the Guild, plus officers, membership application                     |

PLEASE CHECK ITEMS DESIRED, ENCLOSE PAYMENT AND MAIL TO: SACRED DANCE GUILD,  
Cayuga Trail, Lake Swannanoa, Oak Ridge, N.J. 07438.

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